

Amendments to the Claims:

1 – 5 (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, comprising initially compressing the mixture in the mold to reduce voids in the mixture to a value close to a minimum, then increasing the pressure applied to the mixture to at least said amount.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, wherein the filler is chemically inert with respect to the plaster.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, wherein the filler is not chemically inert with respect to the plaster.

10. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, wherein the mixture in the mold comprises a fluidifier.

11. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 10, wherein the fluidifier is a deflocculating agent.

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, wherein said amount of the pressure increases with temperature and is in the range from about 100 to 150 bars when the temperature passes from about 15°C to 20°C.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, wherein the application to the mixture in the mold of a pressure is accomplished by driving at least one element with a reduced cross section with respect to the corresponding cross section of the mold cavity into the mixture in the mold.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 11, wherein the deflocculating agent is melamine.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 13, wherein said element comprises a cylindrical rod sealingly mounted in an orifice of one wall of the mold, and including the step of guiding the rod axially in translation and driving it into the mixture.

16 – 17 (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a building element based on plaster, comprising preparing a mixture of plaster, water and filler, the mixture comprising about 30% to 50% by weight of plaster and about 70% to 50% by weight of filler, placing said mixture in a mold, compressing the mixture in the mold by first applying a packing pressure and then applying a higher pressure to the mixture to obtain the building element, wherein the higher pressure applied to the mixture in the mold and the quantity of water in the mixture are sufficiently high to prevent the plaster crystallization under pressure in the mixture, the higher pressure being of about 150 bars at ambient temperature, and the quantity of water being 35 to 45 parts by weight for 100 parts by weight of plaster, and wherein the mixture is compressed in the mold during 30 seconds to 45 seconds, then unmolding the building element and allowing the plaster in the mixture to crystallize outside the mold.